

к нивелированию конфессиональных противоречий. Последний аспект должен был не просто снять ряд противоречий многонациональной империи, но и способствовать позиционированию России как страны, лидирующей на политической арене Европы после победы над Наполеоном.

Однако директивность методов, а также отсутствие поддержки этих идей среди лицейских преподавателей привели к тому, что попытка модернизации религиозной модели на базе Лицея оказалась малоудачной.

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#### **INEQUALITY, LIGHT RELIGIOSITY AND THE SICARIO FIGURE IN COLOMBIA<sup>1</sup> AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THE SICARIAL RELIGIOSITY ON DARKS 80'S AND 90'S**

*Abstract. The present text intends to show how the figure of the sicario<sup>2</sup> is understandable if the links between social inequality, deep-rooted culture of drug trafficking, light culture and light religiosity<sup>3</sup> are properly read. The aim of this work is to show that the sicario allows academics to make certain lectures about values, social fracture, religiosity, religion and politics in society. To the above, the sicario will be understood as a powerful contemporary figure which requires more attention.*

*Keywords: Colombia, violence, drug trafficking, sicario, light religiosity.*

##### **1. Brief recount of the violence of the 80s and 90s in Colombia. About how the rise of drug-traffic encourages violence.**

Colombia is a country that has a strategic position as the door between Central and South America; It also has one of the greatest wealth of biodiversity and natural resources in the world; however, ironically lives in backwardness, violence and poverty. All the Colombians are affected indirectly or directly, by the rampant corruption and violence that goes back to an endless time, although with different nuances and intensities... but is about the present day that I am interested in talking about.

Due to the eager world in which we live and the power of the globalization, the number of conflicts, the corruption, the hunger and the war have overflowed, and these combinations of elements have been leaving the Caribbean country on the verge of ungovernability. Systematically, throughout history there have been attacks by guerrilla and paramilitary groups, terrorist attacks, massacres, kidnappings, forced disappearances of civilians and social leaders, torture, mutilation, bombs, among other atrocities.

In 2011, the National Center of Historical Memory (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica or CNMH, by its initials in Spanish) was created. Since then, this entity has been working on a map of the violence in Colombia, but the numbers are scandalous. The following are just some striking examples: 1) Between 1970 and 2015 60.630 people have been victims of enforced disappearance. On average, it means that every 24 hours there were three missing. 2) Every year there are more than 25.000 deaths due to violence, more than a thousand-people kidnapped, which constitutes 50% of the kidnapped in the world. 3) There have been more than 400 massacres in the country, mostly carried out by paramilitary groups. 4) In the year of 1999, more than 3.500 people were victims of attacks with political background. 5) Approximately there are more than 250.000 forced displacements, mostly due to violence.

Colombia occupies the shameful third place on the list of internally forced displacements, after Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia<sup>4</sup>.

In the South American country, since the 80's, millions of dollars are mobilized daily due to the drug-traffic business that has permeated all spheres of power and society. One of the many elements that has made presence and made possible this introduction of the mafia in the State is the systematic forced disappearance of people or selective murders. Two elements of terror coexist in these inenarrable system: silent and noisy violence.

From time to time a union-worker, a student, a social, or a political leader just disappears. Forced disappearance is one of the most horrible crimes due all the elements that are there. There are no blue-prints to follow, there is no memory or no grief. This scourge has been used to instill fear, homogenize ideas, and avoid uprisings. This is the reality of the oldest democracies in Latin America<sup>5</sup>.

The above is framed by the plane of indifference, impossibility and impunity. Indifference of the Colombian people, a people historically accustomed to violence; a folk that occasionally goes to bed with a social leader less and that has ended by normalizing this situation<sup>6</sup>. Impossibility of the State to contain this scourge which, added to the corruption, has ended by eliminating the capacity of action of the entities and the legality<sup>7</sup>. Impunity; it is the only possible result in the absence of social pressure caused by the indifference and the impossibility of the state to intervene effectively<sup>8</sup>.

This kaleidoscope of terror, multiple shapes and colors, reveals the difficulty of understanding conflict and violence in Colombia. Such diversity of violence obeys to historical, political, economic, social and cultural reasons; therefore, it is almost impossible to draw a work route, a map, a linear story, or a nexus that even allows understanding and solve the problem. In this respect Van der Walde says that.

The social sciences in the country operate as diagnoses of the various manifestations of violence, organizing the discourse around the various armed actors -guerrilla, paramilitaries, the army, urban militias, youth gangs, terrorist organizations- or trying to link the violence of the present to the violence of the past. The general panorama that emerges reveals an State and a fragmented society without the possibility of a solution or of reaching partial agreements that mitigate the state of terror in which the population is immersed. The diagnosis of the historian Gonzalo Sánchez in 1991, when the violence had not remotely reached the dimensions that it reached ten years later, is that in Colombia is "a war of society entirely with itself", [...] "a collective suicide" [8, p. 215; 14, p. 29-30]<sup>9</sup>.

Following Ospina, who bases his research on the data provided by Palacios and Safford, Colombia is one of the most violent countries in the world. According to these academics, there is an important variation in the rates of crime during the 1990's: of 33 homicides per 100.000 inhabitants in 1980, to 78 between 1991 and 1993. The life of the Colombians, according to Ospina, was disrupted by extraordinary levels of violence. He recalls that, in 1994, in cities such as Bogotá, Cali and Medellín, there was an increase in violence of 10 percentage points. The foregoing is in no way alien to the increase of the power of drug gangs and their peripheral actors (guerrillas, paramilitaries and landholders)<sup>10</sup>. The insane war that Colombia went through during this period still affects the country.

Is important to remember that between the 80's and the 90's the city of Medellín is transformed into one of the most violent cities in the world, this is the result of a hostile social environment, the few cultural and educational assets and a mafia or gang psychology created by the phenomenon of drug-traffic. I consider else important to take in count that the Colombian politics was enriched by the presence of drug cartels; even many of them, some representatives or their close associates entered the political life<sup>11</sup> [10, p.144-145].

Many of the drug-traffickers became cult populist characters to reach the government and joy the favor of the people; the above allowed them to control regions, contacts and avoid the extradition. The ideal balance between popularity and cunning; between compassion and revenge, was required (delicate balance which Machiavelli describes in his famous Prince). One way to achieve the proposed aims was to clear the path from everything or anyone who represented a risk, for that the drug-lords use the sicario figure. Escobar was one of the pioneers, father and protector of these private armies.

During and after the period of Escobar, the perpetuation of drug-traffic in all spheres of daily life in Colombia was originated, while that happened, the sicarios gangs were numbered by hundreds. The death of El Patrón, this historic drug-trafficker, left the sicarios aimlessly. That situation generated a wave of unfocused violence that swooped on the civilian population: robberies, murders and kidnappings were triggered uncontrollably like a horrifying spiral.

Ospina remits to the sociologists Camacho and Guzmán and the writer Salazar to try to understand the phenomenon. Following an idea of his doctoral dissertation, the bands of sicarios

[...] are made up of unemployed young people from marginal sectors in groups seeking "projection of sexuality, friendship, cooperation, promotion and prestige, loyalty" [...] they seek to survive by any means, including violence and terror. [...] Alonso Salazar explains in *Drogas y narcotráfico en Colombia* (2001) that young gangs arise since eighties, period that qualifies as "the massification of the gangs... that fragmented the territories, marked the limits like dogs and prepared to die preaching values at the same time ethereal as rooted in our society: Manhood, verraquera, machera". [10, p. 163]<sup>12</sup>.

## 2. Inequality and the sicario. Culture and light religiosity.

One lecture that can be done about the fragmentation of Colombian society is that the model of liberal society imported from Europe did not know the Latin American reality. The fissures and contradictions existing in the modern Latin American show one of the biggest social marginality worldwide. The marginalized is a person or a group that does not belong to a certain community; by not belonging, there is no access to the benefits that the group can provide. I speak here about basic services such as water, electricity, health or education; about necessary elements such as a roof, a family or even enough food.

For understanding this problem, Burgos, following the analysis of Ospina, says that Colombia is "A country where, for millions of people, the State doesn't guide, where the family does not love neither educate, where society does not assimilate or dignify their children, from time to time it turns the ferocious armies into the only accessible refuge for numerous people. Colombia has not learned to be a home for most of its children [...] the country has created monsters." [3, p. 65]13.

Discovering now the background of this enigmatic figure of the sicario, I could say that the state absence has pushed the marginalized (an entire society and several of its generations) to backwardness and poverty and there he has a reason. To clarify the panorama, it must be understood that the emergence of mass consumption in modern societies plays a fundamental roll in the sicarios identity configuration.

The drug-traffic, violence and absent of the State have given life to the sicario. Now, basic goods and services, as well as consumer and recreational goods, have are available to young people who have been historically marginalized (even since they were in the womb). "In this way, the poorest sectors of this city seek to be part of the 'subculture' created by drug trafficking. In this context, the drug-traffic, says critic Rosana Reguillo in 'The Social Construction of Fear' (2002), is an invisible and unattainable force built by the sociopolitical 'superpowers' with the help of the media, which moves between the illegal, the violence and contamination." [10, p. 56]14.

The inhabitants of Medellin slums, through drug-traffic and gangs, gain access to consumer goods promoted by market that were denied to them before they were born. This new good access created a renewed popular aesthetic that consists of two elements which are symbols of how and why they got social status: motorcycles and guns. Ospina [10] in the page 152 of his doctoral thesis quotes Susana Rotker in "Cities Written by Violence" (2002) to say, through her, that "This money [...] from drug-traffic gives the sicario an ephemeral possession of a status, of a well-being sought by marginalized young people and fosters a culture of transgression, desire and corruption where anyone can die for a pair of tennis shoes. The young people of the marginal neighborhoods are not aware of being the target of the consumer society; its finality is to access these goods by any means, and the most effective method is violence"15.

The new social configuration that results due the influence of drug-traffic, the need for consumption, the lack of State and values in everyday life, brings with it a new and original language: the sicario possesses an aesthetic derived from his trade and his culture: the motorcycle and the weapon. My doubt now is that, as a Colombian, I know that many of these sicarios even were taught under religious values at school. Is not a non-important fact that Colombia, Mexico and Paraguay have the mayor rates of Catholics, especially if is taken in count that "Latin America is home to more than 425 million Catholics, [that means that] nearly 40% of the world's total Catholic population lives there. [It is else remarkable that] from 1900 through the 1960's, at least 90% of Latin America's population was Catholic [and nowadays,] 84% of Latin Americans report that they were raised Catholic." [4, p. 4-7] So, how those symbols of violence consumerism and status are approved in a solid and traditional catholic society? How to conciliate them?

The sicario does not understand that a murder is a crime but his daily life and his work. Given this daily routine, religious elements respond by adapting to the times16. Catholic iconography is a symbol of protection and luck; they ask for good marksmanship and good payment. The sicario is the face of a sort of socio-religious aesthetic which derivates from the violence of the 80's and 90's in Colombia. The religious beliefs and the use of Catholic iconography come together in the figure of the Sicario to give rise to a rapid violence, which does not differentiate between thinking and acting. That shows a contemporary violence that is the daughter of false happiness promises due to marginalization.

The sicario is then framed and determined within the religious cult in a concrete way. Sometimes asks for protection, sometimes for forgiveness and sometimes he is thankful for the success of the crime. The search for God, the virgin and the saints are not only a refuge to find peace or hope, but also a space of freedom from guilt: does God not forgive all our sins? The religiosity is an element of support in the actions of the sicario: the one who prays does so knowing that he will obtain the forgiveness of God. Prayers to can kill, prayers else can be redeemed. Does God not forgive all our sins? The violence that exists in Colombia is so deep and rooted that, undoubtedly, transgresses and adapts the traditional moral and religious values of the Catholic Church17.

To fully understand this contemporary religiosity, would be good understand what is light as well because they are complementary elements. Light is the contemporary in terms of immediacy, appearance and superficiality. It worries about the less important or transcendent because there is no time or stability for ulterior causes. Therefore, a society that educates for the light educates for the easy and consequently is unstructured and mobile. It has no

models or ideals, people have no value in themselves and have no past or future; only a fragmented and glassy present. The light is oriented towards pleasure and the law of least effort, so, there are no responsibilities or consequences. For the above, the sicario is the result of the marginalization, drug traffic and light culture influenced by mass consumption.

Following the previous diagnosis, light religiosity is characterized by the fact that beliefs or dogmas do not necessarily translate the norms for behavior. The sicario is an immediatist, live the moment and wants everything fast. He is a subject without a future or aspirations but with ambitions; a sensualist who only has the right now; therefore, the daily life satisfaction is sacred [5]. For that reason, the religiosity of the sicario is ephemeral and superstitious; the iconography is mixed with rituals of luck, with his aesthetics and his way of life.

Prayers, religious tattoos and rosaries work for both: luck and protection. The figure of the sicario allows a recompression of contemporary Catholic thought which reflects a new light religiosity and that is an open door to make certain lectures about values, social fracture, religiosity, religion and politics in Colombian society. He is a powerful contemporary figure which requires more attention.

I will conclude with an example which is contained in the text of Burgos "La religiosidad en la novela sicariesca en Colombia". Such example reflects the social fragility, the consumerism, the bond created in the group of sicarios (thanks to which it is no longer a marginal). The example talks about mourning in the face of death, about the funeral and about how the light has permeated the sicarios world and transformed the traditional Catholic rites. In the figure of the sicario is appreciated

[...] a change of theological paradigm, pagan and carnival cults and rituals that detract from the Christian conception of death, there is a ceremonial transgression, of Catholic mourning in the handling of the corpse and the divine charge is lost. [...] For the sicario, death is an event of the many that provides life and the one that summons them, the only practice capable of ritualizing them, is dispensable and transitory: 'And if life has a meaning, this is also circumstantial, inconsequential and immediatist. Death then becomes a good, a rest and a liberation from a life full of anguish' The common condition is absolute fatalism, he knows that he dies young, an existentialist principle: he only cares to live the moment, the only certain thing is death and he should accept it with humor and laughter. [3, p. 84–85]18.

#### Notes:

1 This research was supported by the Russian Science Foundation (RSF), project no. 18–18–00216.

2 The translation is mine.

3 Popular figure of contract killer in Colombia.

4 This last term should be understood as a glassy, fractured, ethereal, contemporary and almost shamanic religiosity.

5 All the numbers are official. They have been taken from the website of CNMH. <http://www.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co>

6 Historically, democracy in Colombia dates to the beginning of the 19th century. Information taken from the Colombian National Government website: Marca Colombia. URL: <http://www.colombia.co/esta-es-colombia/historia/por-que-se-dice-que-colombia-tiene-la-democracia-mas-antigua-de-america-latina/> (date of access: 28.09.2018)

7 It is worth remembering that the Colombian people says no in the polls to the peace agreement with the FARC-EP, which aims to put an end to a bloody war of more than 50 years with that subversive group. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/02/colombia-referendum-rejects-peace-deal-with-farc> (date of access: 28.09.2018)

8 The resounding failure of the anti-corruption referendum is memorable in this context. URL: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-colombia-referendum/colombian-anti-corruption-referendum-fails-to-meet-quorum-idUSKCN1LB0GI> (date of access: 28.09.2018)

9 Rochlin J. The political economy of impunity in Colombia // Colombian labour, Conflict, Security & Development. 2016. № 16:2. P. 173–196.

10 The translation is mine.

11 It is important to highlight that, in Colombia, 1% of the owners concentrate more than 80% of the rural lands. For more information: Edward T. (2014) and Faguet J., Sánchez F. & Villaveces M. (2016). Else the report (in spanish) of Russia Today is interesting: <https://actualidad.rt.com/actualidad/248195-informe-desigualdad-tierras-colombianas> (date of access: 28.09.2018)

12 Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria was elected as substitute representative to the Chamber of deputies in 1982, for example.

13 The translation is mine.

14 The translation is mine.

15 The translation is mine.

16 The translation is mine.



17 The sicario is nothing more than the reflection on the mirror of a peasant society into a modern one under the focus that Colombia has not abandoned the policies of social exclusion: from the rosary, the espadrilles and the machete to the scapular, the motorcycle and the gun.

18 Burgos mentions that, according to Alonso Salazar, when Pablo Escobar request to Father García Herreros to bless a medal of the Virgin that he used to wear; then the bodyguards, who had killed hundreds of policemen and other enemies of the cartel, knelt and asked the priest to confess them and give them his blessing to be forgiven. [3, p. 53].

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**Горобец Л. А.**

#### **ИСТОРИЗМ И АТТРАКЦИЯ В ПРОБЛЕМНОМ ПОЛЕ СОВРЕМЕННОЙ КУЛЬТУРОЛОГИИ**

*Аннотация. В статье предложен оригинальный подход к структурно-функциональному анализу культуры в контексте ее исторической трансформации. Предпринята попытка обоснования нового понятийного инструмента исследования, в качестве которого используется культурный аттрактор.*

*Ключевые слова: историзм, развитие культуры, культурный аттрактор.*

Культурология – одна из наиболее молодых гуманитарных дисциплин. Многочисленные свидетельства о ранних этапах ее формирования хранятся в памяти старшего поколения ныне здравствующих исследователей. Одновременно с этим, рождение культурологи – заметная веха на пути самопознания человека, измеряемого многими тысячелетиями. Она убедительно демонстрирует зрелость его рефлексии и богатство жизненного опыта. На ум приходит невольная метафора «старого младенца», пророческий дар которого